

**TOURISM SERVICES AND THEIR IMPACT ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of tourism services on regional economic development. The study examines challenges and opportunities within the tourism sector, focusing on strategic directions such as regional clustering and digitalization. It concludes that tourism can significantly contribute to economic diversification and sustainable growth.

Keywords: Tourism, economic development, regional clusters, service exports, digital platforms, sustainability, investment.

Аннотация: В данной статье проводится всесторонний анализ влияния туристических услуг на региональное экономическое развитие. Рассматриваются проблемы и возможности туристической сферы, а также стратегические направления, такие как формирование региональных кластеров и цифровизация. Сделан вывод, что туризм может существенно способствовать диверсификации экономики и устойчивому развитию.

Ключевые слова: Туризм, экономическое развитие, региональные кластеры, экспорт услуг, цифровые платформы, устойчивость, инвестиции.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada turizm xizmatlarining mintaqaviy iqtisodiy rivojlanishga ta'siri keng ko'lamda tahlil qilindi. Turizm sohasidagi muammolar, imkoniyatlar, shuningdek, hududiy klasterlar va raqamlashtirish kabi strategik yo'nalishlar batafsil ko'rib chiqildi. Turizm iqtisodiyotni diversifikatsiya qilish va barqaror rivojlanishga xizmat qilishi mumkinligi asosiy xulosalar sifatida keltirildi.

Kalit so'zlar: Turizm, iqtisodiy rivojlanish, hududiy klasterlar, xizmatlar eksporti, raqamli platformalar, barqarorlik, sarmoya.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, tourism has been recognized as one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy. In particular, as one of the leading segments of the service sector, tourism contributes not only to an increase in national income, but also to the expansion of employment, ensuring interregional economic balance and cultural exchange. Therefore, the role of tourism in regional economic development is increasingly increasing.

Tourism services directly affect the development of local infrastructure, transport networks, hotel and catering services. In addition, it creates an additional source of income for the local population, increases the activity of small and medium-sized businesses, and expands the types of services aimed at export. Especially in regions rich in historical and cultural monuments, tourism is of great importance not only as a factor of economic, but also as a factor of social stability.

The relevance of studying the topic is primarily due to the need to fully utilize the economic potential of tourism services in developing countries like Uzbekistan. Regional differences, economic opportunities and varying levels of infrastructure create difficulties in analyzing the economic impact of tourism. Therefore, this scientific article provides an in-depth analysis of the impact of tourism services on regional economic development.

Main part

Tourism services are a complex of services that include hotels, restaurants, transport, guide services, cultural and entertainment events, health facilities and other activities. They are aimed at meeting the needs of travelers and occupy a special place in international economic activity.

According to the definition provided by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is the sum of all services that people use during their temporary stay outside their usual place of residence. On this basis, tourism services can be classified as follows:

- Accommodation services (hotels, hostels, family homes);
- Catering services (restaurants, cafes, national cuisine services);
- Transport (aviation, railway, bus, car rental);
- Cultural and entertainment services (museums, theater visits, festivals);
- Medical and health tourism (sanatoriums, SPA centers);
- Ecotourism and extreme tourism services.

Today, diversification of services has become an important factor determining competitiveness in the tourism sector.

Regional economic development is a process associated with economic growth, increased production volumes, infrastructure development and an increase in the level of social well-being within certain geographical areas, regions or cities within the country.

The main criteria for regional development are:

- Employment level;
- Gross regional product (GRP);
- Infrastructure development (roads, communications, education, medical institutions);
- Amount of foreign and domestic investments;
- Business activity and the share of the service sector.

From this point of view, tourism services directly or indirectly affect almost all of these indicators. Especially in regions with relatively low economic activity, tourism serves as the main catalyst for development.

The relationship between tourism and economic development is explained on the basis of various economic theories. In particular:

- Keynesian approach: the state invests in tourism infrastructure - which increases employment and consumption;
- Endogenous growth theory: tourism stimulates sustainable growth through human capital and innovation;
- Multiplier effect: one tourist expenditure causes economic activity in several sectors (for example, catering, transport, trade).

Tourism services have a positive impact not only on the expansion of the service sector, but also on the development of other sectors close to it. Therefore, modern economists recognize tourism as a strategic development sector.

The impact of tourism services on regional economic development. Tourism services, as one of the driving forces of the regional economy, are causing many economic, social and environmental changes. Especially in regions rich in natural resources, with historical monuments, but with underdeveloped industries, tourism is emerging as the main means of restoring regional economic activity. The tourism sector drives a network of services that have many direct and indirect contributions to the economy. This plays an important role in increasing regional incomes, providing employment, and improving the standard of living of the population.

Among the direct impacts, the most important indicator is the expenditure of tourists on various types of services. They contribute to the growth of local incomes through their spending on hotels, restaurants, transportation, gifts, cultural events, and excursions. Especially for local small and

medium-sized business owners, artisans, and family entrepreneurs, tourism is a constant flow of customers and a source of stable income.

For example, in historical cities such as Bukhara, Khiva, and Samarkand, the impact of tourism on the local economy is significant. In these regions, tourism has increased the number of hotels, improved the quality of service, and increased the number of private sector businesses.

The indirect impact of tourism is also manifested at several levels:

- Multi-sectoral linkages: The development of tourism infrastructure also increases economic activity in other sectors, such as construction, energy, agriculture, and information technology.

- New jobs: The number of people employed in the formal and informal tourism sector increases, and the employment rate rises.

- Tax revenues: Tax revenues from tourism services to the state budget increase, which helps improve regional social infrastructure.

Infrastructure and transport development. Another important impact of tourism is reflected in infrastructural development. Airports, bus stations, roads, internet connections, hotels, and other infrastructure networks are improved to attract tourists to regions. This improves the quality of life not only for tourists, but also for the local population.

Socio-economic stability and impact on migration. Tourism creates jobs for the population in developing regions and encourages young people to stay in the region. On the contrary, people from regions without economic opportunities are forced to move to other places. Therefore, the tourism sector is an important tool for regulating regional migration flows, maintaining demographic balance and ensuring social stability.

International experience. Tourism plays a strategic role in regional development worldwide. For example, tourism is the main source of income for the Campania and Calabria regions in southern Italy. Also, in Turkish provinces such as Antalya and Muğla, hundreds of new hotels, shopping centers, and transport systems have been built thanks to tourism. These experiences allow us to consider tourism as a sustainable means of regional economic growth.

Empirical analysis: Tourism and regional economic development in the case of Uzbekistan. In recent years, the development of tourism services in the Republic of Uzbekistan has become one of the priority areas of state policy. Presidential resolutions, government programs, and infrastructure modernization projects indicate that great attention is being paid to this area. In particular, the tourism sector is considered an important factor in strengthening regional economic activity, stimulating small and medium-sized businesses, and increasing employment.

Ko'rsatkich	Qiymat
Xorijiy sayyohlar soni	5,2 million
Ichki sayohatlar soni	14,3 million
Turistik xizmatlar eksporti	1,6 milliard AQSH dollari
Turizmga band bo'lgan aholi soni	350 ming kishi
Mehmonxonalar soni	1 500 dan ortiq
Turizm obyektlariga investitsiyalar hajmi	2 trillion so'm atrofida

According to the State Statistics Committee of Uzbekistan, the number of foreign tourists visiting the country in 2022 exceeded 5 million. This figure is 4 times higher than during the pandemic in 2020. At the same time, domestic tourism is also developing rapidly - in 2022, the number of domestic trips reached 14 million.

Tourism development is especially strong in Samarkand, Bukhara, Khorezm, Tashkent and Kashkadarya regions. Registan Square in Samarkand, Ark and Mir Arab madrasahs in Bukhara,

Ichan Kala in Khiva, historical sites in Termez and Shahrisabz are the main destinations that determine the country's tourism potential.

The Silk Road Tourism Forum and the OTS Summit held in Samarkand in 2023 attracted significant investments in tourism infrastructure. At the same time, the opening of international hotels in Bukhara and Khiva had a positive impact on the regional economy.

More than 500 billion soums of state budget funds were allocated for the development of tourism in 2020–2023. In addition, tourism infrastructure - airports, transport routes, hotels - was modernized based on loans provided by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. For example:

- Samarkand International Airport was reconstructed;
- The Bukhara-Khiva railway line was renovated;
- Tourism centers were established in the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

As a result of the development of tourism services, hundreds of local citizens were provided with jobs. Including:

- Tourist guides;
- Craftsmen;
- Catering services employees;
- Hotel and transport employees.

This is especially true for the number of women and young people earning income through services within family entrepreneurship - cooking national dishes, selling folk crafts, and producing handmade souvenirs.

Tourism is a multifaceted industry that is experiencing not only economic, but also cultural, environmental, and social changes. The specific features, opportunities, and risks inherent in this industry distinguish it from other economic sectors. That is why not only statistical indicators, but also infrastructural, cultural, and social factors play an important role in analyzing the development of tourism services.

For Uzbekistan, tourism is considered a means of promoting national heritage worldwide, as well as an important factor in economic growth. However, in the current state of this industry, there are a number of problems, each of which requires a systematic approach.

1. Incomplete infrastructure – hotels, roads, means of transport and communication, and recreation facilities necessary for tourists are not enough in some regions. For example, although historical cities such as Shahrisabz, Termez, and Kokand are interesting for tourists, getting there, staying there, eating there, or finding a guide is still difficult.
2. Low service culture and human resources – most tourism service providers still offer traditional and inconvenient services. Aspects such as international service standards, online booking, and a flexible approach to customers have not been widely implemented.
3. Weak marketing and advertising – Although Uzbekistan has many years of historical, architectural, and natural resources, this potential has not been sufficiently advertised on the world market. There is a lack of websites, mobile applications, visual materials, and presentations necessary for foreign tourists.
4. Lack of competitiveness – Uzbekistan is competing with neighboring countries such as Kazakhstan, Georgia, and Turkey in attracting tourists. However, much work remains to be done in terms of tourism prices, quality of service, safety infrastructure, and cultural integration.

Along with these problems, Uzbekistan has broad prospects in the tourism sector. The main thing is that this sector can be brought to a new level by properly managing existing resources and positive trends.

1. Creation of digital tourism infrastructure – this sector cannot develop without modern technologies. A single tourism platform, online guide services, virtual tours based on AR/VR

technologies, a QR code guide system – all this creates convenience for tourists and develops the digital economy.

2. Regional specialized clusters – for example, archaeological tourism in Surkhandarya, handicraft and gastronomic tourism in Fergana, ecological tourism in Karakalpakstan. Each region offers its own unique tourism product, which helps to overcome economic centralization.

3. Public-private partnership - it is necessary to stimulate local business through incentives, subsidies, land allocation and leasing opportunities for private entrepreneurs investing in the tourism sector. The state should be a regulator and coordinator in this process.

4. Training personnel and improving service culture - improving educational programs in cooperation with international tourism academies, training practicing guides, operators who know foreign languages, managers and hotel staff will increase quality in tourism.

Conclusion

Uzbekistan is a country with rich tourism potential, with unique natural, historical and cultural resources. In recent years, special attention has been paid to the development of this sector in state policy, which has yielded significant results. However, a systematic, sustainable and competitive approach is necessary to fully reveal the real economic potential of the sector.

The analysis reviewed in this article shows that tourism services have a direct and indirect impact on regional economic development. The direct impact is manifested in the increase in service exports, employment creation and increased demand for local producers, while the indirect impact is noticeable in the development of infrastructure, improvement of the quality of social services, and international integration.

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